

February 2019

## Senior Health and Wellness Newsletter

Kentucky Department for Aging and Independent Living



### How to Manage Your Diabetes : AADE 7 Self-Care Behaviors

Diabetes is a chronic disease where the body does not use sugar for energy properly. Diabetes can cause high and/or low blood sugars. When you eat, sugar is digested and enters the blood stream. Insulin, a hormone, is used to take the blood sugar and use it in red blood cells. This is when the sugar is used for energy.

With type 1 diabetes, the pancreas does not produce insulin. People with Type 1 diabetes must take insulin injections. Type 2 diabetes (the most common form) is when the body produces insulin but it does not work properly.

Diabetes is diagnosed by using blood sugar levels and hemoglobin A1c values. The most accurate blood sugar values are done as fasting (no food or drink for 8 hours). The Hemoglobin A1c blood test is a 3-month average of the person's blood sugar. These levels are as follows:

	Blood Glucose	Hemoglobin A1c
Normal	<100mg/dl	5.7%
Prediabetes	100-125mg/dl	5.7-6.5%
Diabetes	≥126mg/dl	6.6%

Whether you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes, it is important to have proper education on how to manage your diabetes to avoid or



delay the onset of complications. Complications can consist of: amputations, difficulty with vision, kidney disease, loss of feeling in hands and feet, and wounds that are difficult to heal. Though some of these are not preventable, with proper diabetes management, these complications can be managed.

Many health professionals should make up your diabetes management team. Your team should consist of your doctor (general and/or endocrinologist), diabetes educator, registered dietitian, pharmacist, family members, support groups and friends (new and old) who lives with diabetes. It is important to be open with your team members about your diabetes and lifestyle to ensure you are receiving the right treatment.

According to the American Association of Diabetes Educators (AADE), 7 key areas were developed to focus on to manage your diabetes. These 7 topics should be discussed regularly with your diabetes management team.

The AADE7 Self-Care Behaviors™ are:

♦ **Healthy Eating**

Eating regular healthy meals, think about the amount you eat, and knowing what foods influence your blood sugars can help control your blood sugar

♦ **Being Active**

Physical activity can help lower blood sugar, lower blood pressure, relieves stress and anxiety, improve sleep, and help achieve and maintain a healthy weight

♦ **Monitoring**

Checking your blood sugar regularly will give you a better idea of your blood sugar and how meals affect your blood sugar

♦ **Taking Medication**

Taking medications as they are prescribed is very important. It is important to have a good understanding of your medications, how they work and what to expect with your diabetes. Talk with your pharmacist about your medication questions.



♦ **Problem Solving**

It is important to learn how to maintain your blood sugar, handle a high and/or low blood sugar with everyday situations. This also involves planning ahead and having support to discuss all of your options and plans.

♦ **Reducing Risks**

Complications is common with people with diabetes. Complications can be avoided by sticking with your medical plan and appointments, physical activity, healthy eating, problem solving and dealing with stress.

♦ **Healthy Coping**

Having diabetes can be difficult. Making the appropriate lifestyle changes can help with stress, complications, and avoiding bad decisions.

References:

<https://www.cdc.gov/media/presskits/aahd/diabetes.pdf>

<http://www.diabetes.org/diabetes-basics/diagnosis/?loc=db-slabnav>

<https://www.diabeteseducator.org/living-with-diabetes/aade7-self-care-behaviors>

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<https://chfs.ky.gov/agencies/dail/Pages/nutrition.aspx>